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Chipaya

/118 cont./

221 796 132 [152] objective of requesting the demons and saints to send them prosperity along with the rain. The beginning of the year 1931 was marked by a long period of dryness (1) and I witnessed the anguish

1. During the months of January and February I made a certain number of meteorological observations which were unfortunately incomplete because of my frequent moves. For January the average maximum temperature was 19° to 20° /centigrade/ and that of the minimum temperature 6°. In February we had an average maximum temperature of 19° and a minimum temperature of 5°. In January I noted a high of 24° and a low of 1°. For February the high was 23° and the low −1°. February was rainier than January although the end of the latter month was marked by some violent storms and hail.

of the Čipaya; this anxiety manifested itself perhaps in the pomp and seriousness with which they carried out the festivals which I shall describe later.

The winter is a testing time for the Čipaya. They spoke to me in eloquent language of its rigors—dried and yellowed pastures, thin and starving animals, icy winds which pierced to the /119/ [182] bone. This entire season passes without festivals, at least without pagan festivals, and this cessation of religious life is good evidence of the close correlation that exists between the pagan ceremonies of the Čipaya and their problems of subsistence.

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/119 cont./

133 No one yet knows to what extent environment can influence
187 the religious conceptions of a human group, but if environment
does indeed exercise the action on imagination which formerly
was credited to it there can be no doubt that Cipaya mythology
would have to abound in harsh and cruel elements. Life in the
[52] Carangas deserts is hard. The Indians are the first to acknowledge
this, and they speak of their territory only with a dull bitterness:
"these bare plains where we live," such is the expression which
133 most frequently recurs. Few regions have given me such an im-
pression of emptiness as Chipaya. The mountains on the horizon
rise on the plains as if emerging from the sea. The color of this
territory is a uniform green verging on the grey cut by the dunes
in a pale stroke.

This landscape would be most desperately monotonous with-
out the escape afforded by the Kimsa chata, the three snowy
summits which are glimpsed to the north. The Sajama, one of
the most beautiful peaks of the Andes and which the Cipaya wor-
ship, is not visible from the village itself, Cerro Camacha
hiding it from sight.

136 The small artificial lakes of Chipaya attract a considerable
number of water birds of different species. The flamingos (parina)
(Phoenicopterus andinus, Phil.) whose insipid meat is rightly dis-
dained by the Indians and which abound in Chipaya bring the only
lively note into the monotony of the landscape. Nothing is more
impressive than a flock of these marvelous birds outlining them-
selves in red against the brilliant blue of the puna sky. The
237 Indians use their feathers to decorate their hats at the time of the
825 great festivals. The eggs of these flamingos must be associated
[782] with symbols of a religious or magical type for the Indians never
fail to place one or two at the foot of the sacred sheaves which
are one of the principal accessories of their pagan worships. I
[301] have even seen individuals who put on curious diadems made of
flamingo eggs threaded together.

/342 cont./

He lived far from the tribe on a place called Yunguyo. He was never seen in the village. He appeared only for the festivals, strangely dressed and reciting his prayers without stop, kneeling, rising, and offering libations with a half-comical, half-tragic pomposity. He was treated with a certain respect due to his art, and I believe that the Chipaya insisted on having him with them during all their festivals no matter how small. He animated them and gave them the religious character which they would often have lacked without him.

/343/ Anacleto Mullo, of whom I previously spoke, was the most intelligent of all the Chipaya with whom I had dealings. His small, lively eyes sparkled with a mocking gleam, and he never missed an opportunity to tell a joke, even an improper one. His facial mobility was such that he could immediately abandon his jovial air to take on a grave and serious expression, as if he were the most respectable of men.

Festivals and Rites

The taking of office of the new authorities (January 1).

The first of January, the day on which the transmission of powers is carried out in Chipaya is the occasion of a festival, the only one in which only rare pagan elements are mingled. I shall mention a few of its details which illustrate the attitude of the Chipaya toward the Catholic religion. That morning the small church of the tribe had been abundantly lighted; lamps or tallow candles were burning on all the altars and fragrant smoke was rising from all the censers. The outgoing Alcaldes had gathered beside their successors near the altar, and a kind of sacristan was fumigating them copiously. Some women squatting behind the men were sobbing and sighing as though their hearts were broken. They were only quiet when small baked clay llamas which they had placed on the altar were distributed, they kissed them and fondled

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/344 cont./ Brandishing his white banner, he led the troup of musicians and
622 dancers, stopping in front of each hut to obtain a tribute of alcohol
535 for himself and his troup. In exchange for this gift he gave his
[931] momentary host the privilege of seizing the white banner and
putting himself at the head of the dancers. The end of the day was
[913] only a succession of rounds and drinking which went on until complete exhaustion.

622 The second day. On the next day, noticing that all the Indians were going toward a particular hut, I in turn went. There I found about 30 individuals, men and women, squatting on the floor around the alcalde taking office, who was seated on a pile of cloth behind a table facing the door. He was holding his stick of authority in his arm and had bunches of flowers and a napkin full of coca in front of him. His physiognomy did not act in his favor; his ravaged, closed face was scarred with smallpox; his thick features, aquiline nose, and projecting chin gave him an air which was both cruel and bestial. I sat down next to the men immediately to the right of the host. All were keeping a profound, almost disturbing silence. At long intervals a man would rise to profer his
[906] bag of coca to the alcalde. The latter would take a few leaves from it and tender his own chuspa with a bored gesture. Others moved toward the table, took a pinch of coca leaves, some of which they left in front of the flowers, and swallowed the rest.
[982] The drinkers never forgot their libations directed, as were the
[913] offerings, toward the flowers on the table. On that day the chicha of maize and quinua, in exception to the rule, competed with the alcohol. It was served by the women in terra-cotta bowls. I had the opportunity to be present that afternoon at a scene, the significance of which remains a mystery to me. A man got up and greeted a young woman in the usual manner; /345/ she replied to his greeting and went to kneel at the head of the audience. The individual who had greeted her took the young woman's head and shoved it against that of a man squatting next to her. Several
[152] seconds later the young woman gave way to weeping identical to that with which the church had resounded the day before. Silence

2:Métraux--128 E-b (1930-1931) 1935, 1936 SF24 Uru SF24

Curanga-
Chipaya

/393/

The dead woman's husband and her sisters just barely and only at long intervals gave way to a few quickly stifled sobs.

The body was carefully done up in an urku (1), and only the

1. Cloth which the women wear around their bodies by way of a tunic.

face remained uncovered until evening, when one of the corners of the cloth which enveloped her was pulled over it and a rope was placed crosswise on it. The husband, who was not worth a sou, displayed profound anguish at the thought of not being able to hold a wake. When I gave him something to buy cigarettes, coca, and alcohol, he thanked me and seemed as if relieved of a great anxiety. He shut himself in his hut with his brother and another Indian, probably a relative. The close relatives of the woman from bitterness against the widower, whom they continued to suspect of a crime, stayed at home. Between the threshold and the corpse an iron spike had been planted and a small tallow lamp was burning beside the body. The husband and his two companions, squatting at the dead woman's feet, smoked and drank with complete serenity of soul. The first, however, interrupted his bumpers of eau-de-vie from time to time with little attacks of tears, of short duration nonetheless. He likewise addressed the customary reproaches to the dead woman in a tone lacking in conviction: "Why hast thou left, why hast thou left me, when will we meet again?" At a particular moment he placed on his wife's feet a bowl full of alcohol, which he set fire to as well as to some coca leaves.

At dawn a large number of the women of the clan came and squatted in the house. They remained there a long time, immobile and silent. Toward ten o'clock in the morning the corpse was carried to the cemetery and buried with a little food, coca, and alcohol. The dead woman's spindle was buried with her, and the pot and bowls which she used were broken and thrown into the fire

Cayapa-
Chipaya

/391 cont./

with her spoon and other effects. This is the last which the earthly goods left by the Cipaya undergo, and the charred remains of their holdings are piled up beside the enclosure where their body reposes. The husband gave out a few more tears near the tomb and returned home, escorted by a large number of individuals who came to take their share of the funerary feast. The widower's family had been occupied with it since morning and had slaughtered two sheep and put enormous kettles full of quinua pulp on the fire. Among the Cipaya as among the Aymara, mourning obligations force the survivors to make considerable sacrifices and to dissipate their meager capital.

Passing near the hut of the widower this same evening, I saw him with one of his children on his back and the other near him busy preparing his dinner. On /394/ seeing me he let out some moans, too modulated to be the expression of any sentiment. This was the last evidence of regret that the dead woman received. From the next day on she was forgotten, and the village, disturbed for a moment, sank back into silence and indifference.

Myths and tales

The stay that I made among the Cipaya was dedicated in large part to gathering as many elements as possible of their agonizing language. In the hope of being able to make a grammar out of it, I busied myself as much as possible with assembling expressions, phrases, and coherent narrative. Accomplishing this task was not always easy for me. The Cipaya know only Aymara outside their own language and, with the exception of the corregidor and two or three young people, do not know a word of Spanish. In order to be able to deal with them, I almost always had to have recourse to my Aymara interpreter, and the impossibility which often arose of being able to communicate

Dominique--DM E-5 (1930-1932) 1935.1938 DM4 Dos DM4
Carnegie
CA Mayo

/305 cont./

[illegible] boredom and silence overhangs the village. The children themselves share in the general callousness: they never have fun, so to speak, and have no toys. The men watch over their sleep with a vague eye as they squatting in their huts chewing [illegible] or doing nothing. The women, if necessity forces them, weave some coarse material as occupy their leisure time by looking for lice on each other or by having the innumerable small plaits of their hair made.

The Chipeya are nonetheless much more congenial and pleasant than their neighbors the Aymara. They do not have the morbid mistrust of strangers which many of the Bolivians have inherited from the Aymara. They are also not so stupidly grasping and stubborn as the latter. The Chipeya are, without doubt, of all the Indians on the altiplano the most pleasant and easygoing. In spite of this dismal apathy which I have just noted, they are capable of laughing, which rarely happens among the Aymara, or least in the presence of strangers. They know how to appreciate work, and my relations with them were almost always excellent. I had difficulty with only two Chipeya, who, in the middle of a festival insulted me /306/ liberally. Their attitude, due to their alcoholic excesses, was severely judged by those present. During all the ceremonies in which I took part, I was the object of all sorts of attentions, and they never forgot to offer me alcohol and coca. This generosity was all the more touching as the poor Chipeya pay a lot for these products and, as a result of the crisis, had only a very little. I often received presents of small cheeses which were given me as a sign of recognition for a service or advice. Sometimes these humble gifts were made without any hidden reason, simply out of friendliness.

I never had to complain of dishonesty among them, but I have reason to believe, however, that they are not so scrupulous when it is a question of the property of other members of the tribe. Several small facts removed all my illusions in this respect. Life in Chipaya is not idyllic. Jealousy rages there like an unbridled and malevolent devil. The Indian dared to sell me the objects which I acquired for my collections in broad daylight, all heard the unkind comments of their [illegible]

D'Orbigny--209 E-5 (1930-1931) 1935.1936 SF54 Div SF54
Cayagua-
Chipaya

[208 cont.]

of those near them. The envy which tortures these contained and repressive beings manifests itself in an underhand manner in low acts of revenge, in denunciations of each other to the alcaldes, and in interminable quarrels. Some Čipaya seem to realize this state of mind and complain about it. One of them who had traveled a bit spoke to me of it with bitterness: "Here," he said, "all hate each other, all envy each other, all steal from each other, and it does not make a good life."

Married life often reflects the brutality and ill-nature of the characters. Disputes between spouses are frequent and degenerate into volleys of blows with sticks which the husband administers to his wife or reciprocally. The in-laws take part in these domestic conflicts and add to them. These quarrels can give way to drama: a few days after my arrival in Chipaya, a woman in a sudden fit of hysterical anger against her husband strangled herself with her own hands.

Sexual morality seems to be, from what the Čipaya told me had from one point of view. Young girls enjoy a great deal of freedom before marriage, and no importance seems to be granted to virginity. Illegitimate children are welcome and do not prevent them from marrying. In contrast, infractions against conjugal fidelity can have serious repercussions. Some women seem to let themselves be seduced easily, and these cases of adultery or attempted adultery provoke in turn brawls and scuffles. In general there is no apparent affection between man and wife. The women have nonetheless a privileged position, and their authority is incontestable. They speak to their husbands in firm and decisive tones, and no decision can be [207] made without their consent. The children are never maltreated. From the point of view of character, the Čipaya compare very favorably with the Uru of Ancoaqui, their brothers in race who still more than they have felt the pernicious Aymara influence. [illegible] Uru of the Desaguadero compete in hostility and distrust of strangers, even well-meaning ones, and it is hardly pleasant to stay with them.

*539 /182 cont./ also the Uru do not have any
81 apachete /piles of stones in the hills/, offering places /183/
1018 at spots struck by lightning, whereas these little monuments
191 are very frequent among all the neighboring native populations.
152 However, our informant, an Uru, Carlos Kispe, is very frightened
829 of storms. The reason for this is undoubtedly that only the pure
Uru enjoy this immunity, not bastards nor those of mixed blood.
848 Now our informant, although part of the Uru group, was father-
less, "hána hep' šeš- čay," "no father is," "an illegitimate
son," a very frequent case, whose father is unknown. He did
not at all insist on submitting to the test of lightning to be
961 assured of his pure Uru ancestry. If an Uru is struck by thunder,
829 drowned, or even dies of pneumonia -- dangers against which
848 the true Uru are protected -- everyone sees it as indisputable
proof of illegitimate and foreign paternity.

*539 From the point of view of vocabulary this text shows the
191 same irregularities as the preceding text by the same informant
192 (V) /see p. 15/ frequent elisions of final vowels: ča instead of
čay; the repeated use (1-9) of wáli, "much," an Aymara form
not found in the texts nor in the numerous phrases gathered
from the other informant. 2. wáli- píni, association of an
Aymara word and an Uru word with the same meaning to rein-
force the idea; we find an analogous case in ti- hún (5), the
Uru-Spanish association already noted. 2. hána Kála či čúña,
"not good good is," association of two words of almost identical
meaning to reinforce the idea: "this is not good at all." 3. The
particle -kála after the verb "to go" has the exact meaning
of ex in Latin, literally exit. 4. The correct form would be
war- tis. 6. háske indicates a very distant fact, an idea still
more strengthened by the suffix -ta, sign of the past: "a very
long time ago."